The ISSUES ISSUE 2

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and much much more...

the Link

Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec

Volume 8, Number 41
Tuesday March 29, 1988

Agenda

Use the Agenda to publicise any Concordia-related event. Drop off your info at our offices at Sir George(H-649) or mail it in, indicating Agenda on the envelope. Deadlines are 5 p.m. Friday for Tuesday issues and 5 p.m. Wednesday for Friday issues.

TUESDAY MARCH 29

Piano Recital Loyola Chapel, 8 pm, FREE. Ani Essegulian in works by Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Khatchaturian, Albeniz, Poulenc,Ravel.

Nutrition Booth 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, Hall 7th floor, outside the cafeteria. Sponsored by the nurses of Concordia Health Services.

Two-Piano Ensembles 5 pm, Pollack Hall, 555 Sherbrooke W, FREE.

Recital of the Song Interpretation Class, at McGill, 8 pm Pollack Hall, 555 Sherbrooke W. FREE.

Sparklers Lecture-J.C.Negrete on "Alcoholism and Drug Abuse" 3 pm, H-762, SGW. All Welcome.

WEDNESDAY MARCH 30

Organist at McGill, 12:15 pm, Redpath Hall, 3461 McTavish, FREE.

Dominique Bozo Minister of Communication and Culture for France, ex-director of the Picasso and Modern Art museums, on Museums for the Future, in French. 6 pm, Maxwell Cummmings Auditorium, Musee des beaux-arts, FREE. info 842-9805.

Chamber Music at McGill, 5 pm, Pollack Hall, 555 Sherbrooke W. More Chamber Music, 8 pm, Same place. Music by Beethoven, Schubert, Ravel, Dvorak, Brahms. FREE.

THURSDAY MARCH 31

Maurice Podbury artistic director, Centuar Theatre, on Thirty Years of English Theatre in Quebec. 4-5:30 pm, Lonergan College, 7302 Sherbrooke W.

NDP Political Party- 7 pm, 2020 Mackay, Basement. General meeting for new NDP student association. Objectives and goals discussed. info 848-4765 ask for Julie in rm 485.

Concordia Jazz Improvisation Classes- F.C. Smith Auditorium, Loyola, 8 pm, FREE. Info 4706.

Chamber Winds and Concert Band at McGill, 8 pm, Pollack Hall, 555 Sherbrooke W, FREE.

Women's Chorale at McGill, 8 pm, Redpath Hall, 3461 McTavish. FREE.

Sparklers Wine and Cheese Party, for seniors and friends,, 7:30 - 10:30 pm, H-762.

FRIDAY APRIL 1

APRIL FOOLS and GOOD FRIDAY. Could this combination MEAN something?

Good Friday Service- 3 pm. Loyola Chapel.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

Single parents first meeting to establish association. Unite to face the very unique situation single parents are facing. 1 p.m., room P-03, 2020 MacKay. For info: 767-8133

UNTIL APRIL 8...

Easter Sunday service,11 am, Loyola Chapel.

Quakers worship service, 11 am Belmore House. All welcome.

Harpos Cafe 8-11:30 pm, Easter Sunday, Belmore House. Folk music, coffee house.

Jacques Guillot, of Centre national d'art moderne de Grenoble, France, in French, on Museums for the Future. April 6, 6 pm, Maxwell Cummings Auditorium, Musee des beaux-arts. FREE. info 842-9805.

GENERAL

Weekly Meetings of Concordia Students against Apartheid every monday night, 6 pm. P-Annex, 2020 Mackay, rm 203. Everyone welcome.

Practice Room with piano available/Record lending library. come to AD 121 Loyola, Monday-Friday, 11am - 3pm. Info: 848-3510. Sponsored by the Dean of Students Office.

HEALTH SERVICES 9 - 5 daily, closed 12 - 1:30 except for emergencies. SGW 2155 Guy, Rm 407, Loyola 6935 Sherbrooke, Rm 101. No appointment necessary to see a nurse. A wide range of medical services are available, including specialists.

Campus Ministry holds weekly group sessions at SGW H-333-4 on relationships/communication, the gospel, self-awareness, meditation and more, running from February until April. info: M.Beertone, 848-3591.

Debating Society meetings Wednesday 7 pm H-333-6 and Fridays 2 pm H-539-1.

You are going to need a valid Concordia ID card to write your final exams. Get your card validated at the Registrarss Services, LOY-AD-211, or SGW N-107. Get a new card Tuesday or Wednesday at either campus, and bring your contract and another piece of ID.

Auberge Transitions a shelter for battered women in the Montreal area,needs volunteer(s) to help donations co-ordinator wwith clothing sortings. Training provided, only females please. 489-6607 after 6 pm ask for Linda or leave message on machine.

James Guitet 1977-1987, "Propositions" at Gallerie de l'UQAM, Pavillion Judith-Jasmin, J-R120, 1400 rue Berri. Until April 2. info 282-8421.

Medrie McPhee: The Urban Landscape, and Gerard Garneau: drawings and drypoints, at the Concordia Art Gallery, Hall Mezzanine. Always FREE. Vernissage Friday Mar 25, 7:30 pm.

Free Theatre at Loyola- Michel Tremblay's Les Belles Soeurs, April 7, 8pm, April 8, 8pm, April 9, 1 and 7 pm, FREE, limited seating, Chameleon Studio, 7141 Sherbrookee W. info:848-4747.

More Free Theatre, at the National Theatre School, April 5 - 9,8 pm, 1182 St-Laurent. L'Asile de la purete, by Claude Gauvreau, a world premiere.FREE, and the theatre holds 700.

Student Exhibition at UQAM, From Mar 31 to April 10, Gallerie de l'UQAM, Pavillion Judith-Jasmine, J-R120, 1400 Berri. info 282-8421.

IBA/Berlin: Inteernational Architechture Exhibition, Centre de design de l'UQAM, 200 Sherbrooke W, salle 4005, until April 17. info 282-3395.

WOMEN'S LISTINGS

Lesbian Studies Coalition of Concordia will be holding weekly discussion/support/action sessions every Wednesday at 4 p.m. at the Simone de Beauvoir lounge(2170 Bishop, downstairs). New wome, students and faculty, welcome!

The Women's Studies Student Association is looking for new members. All Women's Studies students welcome. Meeetings each Tuesday, 2 pm MU-301-1.info 848-7449.

Concordia Women's Collective new members welcome. We meet fridays at 1:30 pm, 2020 Mackay, rm 202. If you want to join or have ideas call 848-7411 and leave a message, or call the Women's centre 848-7431.

Mireille Neptune-Anglande economist, on Haitian women and their contribution to the Haitian economy. Mar 28, 6:10 pm, Simone de Beauvoir Institute, 2170 Bishop, info 848-2370. Sponsored by le Centre de recherche et d'enseignment sur la francophoniee des femmes. . . . . .

2 Peintre-Graveures- visions et couleurs francophones. March 30, 20h30, Simone de Beauvoire Lounge, 2170 Bishop. With Mirella Aprahamian, Nicole Brunet, and Wendy imon, anamatrice. info 848-2370.

Classified

Classified rates: 20 cents per word for Concordia students, 25 cents per word for others. Deadlines are 5 p.m. Friday for Tuesday issues and 5 p.m. Wednesday for Friday issues. Drop off ad and payment in rm. H-649

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continued on page 4

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the Link

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Prof given the shuffle

Senate says no to exam delay

by Christina Tapler

A faculty representative was given the bureaucratic shuffle during a university senate meeting last Friday when she asked why exam period cannot be delayed one weekend to allow students more study time.

Associate English Professor Katherine Waters asked that exams be delayed to start Monday, April 18, instead of Thursday, April 14. But university vice-rectors postponed discussing the suggestion until the next meeting in May—a week after exams finish.

Waters said the extra weekend will give students who are bogged down with academic assignments more time to prepare for final exams. She noted that the current calendar is inadequate.

"There isn't even one day's rest because it's a make-up day," she said, referring to the day scheduled to make up for classes lost because of holidays.

The official last day of classes is Tuesday, April 12 and the make-up day is April 13.

Waters' blackboard demonstration went by the wayside when Rector Patrick Kenniff told her nothing could be done for this year's schedule and registrar Ken Adams was not present to answer. Kenniff said he would explain scheduling procedures at the next meeting.

Contacted by *the Link* yesterday, university administrators contradicted each other about why exam period cannot be scheduled later.

Student services vice-rector Charles Giguere said the administration does not want summer registration to take place during exam period. He said the administration feels some students, still under stress from exams, would not register for summer courses.

But associate registrar Bruce Smart, whose office reports to Giguere, said the exam period already overlaps summer registration by two days.

Exams run until April 30, while summer registration begins May 28.

"That's the nature of the beast; that's the way it's always been," said Smart, noting that students have a week-long study break during the winter semester, and adding another break would be unfair to those who take courses only in the fall.

CUSA co-president Maxine Clarke said she would prefer Concordia adopt the same system used by American universities. American students get a break in October or November and do their exams after Christmas, she said. In the spring, they get a week-long break and another study break before exams.

"A lot of American universities don't finish classes until the end of April," she said. "We already have a short (semester), and priority should be given to students, not the system."

"Exams can't run later because convocation would have to run later," said Smart, adding that many students are anxious to begin summer jobs and do not want a delay.

But Waters feels the delay is exaggerated.

"We're talking about a matter of a few days," she said. "Students already have a five-month break, which is not (given) anywhere else."

PHOTO BY MIKE SPORTZA

A judge reviews exhibits yesterday at *The Last Picture Show*—a competition being conducted by Concordia graphics design students on the Hall building's mezannine. The exhibition continues until Friday.

Minimum-wage salaries double

Library workers reach agreement

by Cymry Gomery

Library workers at Sir George have accepted a contract which will double the salaries of part-time workers.

The contract between the National Association of Sir George Williams University Employees (NUSGWUE) and Concordia comes after more than a year of negotiations. The agreement must be ratified at April's Board of Governors' meeting.

The union, which went on a two-hour strike last month to press its demands, has been without a contract since October 1986.

NUSGWUE spokesperson Thomas Chalmers said that while both sides are happy with the new contract, the delay in signing the agreement is disappointing to union members because retroactive paycheques are being delayed.

Hal Proppe, associate vice rector of intitutional relations and finance, said last month's walkout did not contribute to the negotiations.

"To the best of my knowledge, there was no strike," he said. "It was more of a protest, or demonstration."

Proppe said he was happy with the agreement. He said negotiations were necessary to arrive at an equitable salary agreement, which restored the spacing between the levels of seniority, effectively "unsquishing" salary scales.

"Given the salary situation, negotiations were conducted in the presence of a conciliator appointed by the governmment (Suzanne Therrien)," he said. "The concilliator came up with a global package—which for us is okay, fine."

Non-teaching staff at other major Montreal universities told *the Link* this week that their situation is similar to that of Concordia workers.

Danielle Perinet, president of the Syndicat des Employes de l'Universite de Montreal (SEUM) said the last major negotiation isssue was a request by non-academic workers for a clause which guaranteed unneeded employees would be re-inserted elsewhere into a job of equal status.

Another important issue was a clause which guaranteed certain privileges to full or part-time workers after working for 24 months. Perinet said there has been a significant improvement in working conditions at the university over the past two years.

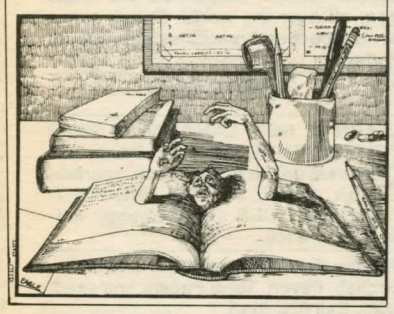
"The (number) of employees per student at UQAM is far lower than Universite de Montreal—it is probably close to Concordia," he said. "Because we're underfinanced, we're probably understaffed....In our case, we could increase the level of employment and still be understaffed when you compare us to l'Universite de Montreal."

Michel Lizee of the Universite du Quebec a Montreal says widespread understaffing at Quebec universities is due to underfunding.

Lizee sees older universities such as Laval, Universite de Montreal and McGill as suffering from an opposite problem—overfunding. As a result, McGill and Universite de Montreal have experienced cuts in available positions.

He said that as new universities opened up in Quebec they were funded at established levels. When student levels increased, the ratios of staff to students at the new universities decreased.

On the other hand, UQAM and Concordia administrators say that because their universities are underfunded, not enough new full-time positions are being created. They suffer from an overabundance of temporary workers whom staff must battle to incorporate.



MCM ignores porn signs

by Heidi Modro

Pornographic displays and strip clubs continue to assault the eyes of Montrealers despite an MCM election promise to regulate such signs.

In its 1986 election platform, the MCM promised "an amendment to the city charter to regulate outdoor commercial signs that display representations of nudity or sexual acts."

While city hall has passed a bylaw to force magazine stores to cover pornographic material with opaque glass and place it 1.5 metres above the floor, the MCM administration has not passed a bylaw eliminating porno signs.

The city's new regulations have existed since January but numerous stores, such as Multimags on de Maisonneuve Boulevard, have ignored them.

Lea Cousineau, Montreal executive committee representative for the Status of Women, said she cannot pass the sign by-law until the federal government adopts a bill defining pornography.

Conservative MPs introduced a proposed amendment (Bill C-54) to the Criminal Code's section on pornography in May, but the Bill is still under parlimentary study.

"We can only intervene in areas that are allocated to us," Cousineau said. "Whatever concerns issues of obsenity and pornography concerns the Criminal Code, therefore the federal government has to give us a definition of pornography before we can do anything."

Over the last 10 years, strip clubs and peep shows have mushroomed downtown, bringing with them displays of women in sexually suggestive poses.

On one five-block area between the McGill and Guy Metro stations, three strip and video sex clubs display 11 women representing nudity and sexual acts.

Michelle Coutu, a student member of the Concordia feminist group Fineline, said that the municipal government is not doing its job.

"They basically made a promise that they are never going to fulfill," she said. "They're taking a typical political stance. They're saying that they need guidance from Ottawa. That's just stalling. It's a tactic politicians use for pressing issues."

Rose Potvin, president of the Ottawa-based Canadian Coalition against Media Pornography, said she questions the Conservative government's prior ities. "It's unknown whether the federal government is interested in stamping out sex or violence," she said.

For her part, Cousineau said it's easier for the municipal government to restrict the display of pornographic magazines

"We were able to intervene in that area because the provincial government gave us power through the Loi de la Protection de la Jeunesse."

PHOTO BY MIKE SPORTZA

The MCM administration has refused to fulfill a 1986 election promise to eliminate pornographic signs.

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continued from page 2

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Congratulations! to Andy, Francesca, Mike, Elena, Ita, Scott, Rob, Heidi, and Aaron. Now everybody don't forget the Assembly April 8th, now y'hear.

LOST/FOUND

Lost/Found ads in the Link are FREE.

Lost in the snow storm- silver brooch with fake diamonds and pearls("old lady" style) on Loyola Campus, GREAT sentimental value—REWARD 276-8217.

Letters

No conflict of interest, Hillel says

to the editors

With all the bickering and conflict that has been going on between Judicial Board and Robert Douglas, I would like to set a few things straight.

Douglas has stated that his allegations of conflict of interest are based not on the fact that the three Judicial Board members are Jewish, but that they were actively involved in Jewish Cultural Week.

As co-ordinator of Jewish Cultural Week, I can clearly state that in no way did David Hutman, Jason Susnick, or Menahem Neuer of the Judicial Board help set up or organize our display.

Therefore, there are no grounds for these charges of conflict of interest.

Alain Mamane
President, Concordia Hillel

A coincidence? "I say no"

to the editors

Wasn't it just a few short months ago that saw students erupt with anger due to the fact that Concordia and McGill were the most underfunded universities in the province? For university students, we must be pretty stupid if we can't put 2 and 2 together and realize that the least funded universities in Quebec are "coincidentally" the English ones.

We have watched apathetically as our government gradually restricted our rights as Canadians. We sat back when we were barred from using English or other languages in the workplace. We stood still when our dignified rights to post signs in the language of our choice was removed We closed our eyes to the fact that a movies can not be released until a French version would be avialble.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

Our language, our livelihood, our education—all the factors of a culture have been removed from us. What next? We sat patiently waiting for a change that did not come. There is a difference between preserving French culture and performing genocide upon the English.

Moving these "two solitudes" apart has not only been an inefficient use of energy but also an ineffective use of time. It's about time that we stop catagorizing in terms of French-Canadians and English Canadians...We should start being Canadians!

Isn't there anyone else out there who believes that unity is more desirable than division? We must get our voice heard in government in order to stop the current madness. If you want to help me, your opinions are welcome at 341-1953.

Jeff Pekar

QPIRG says thanks

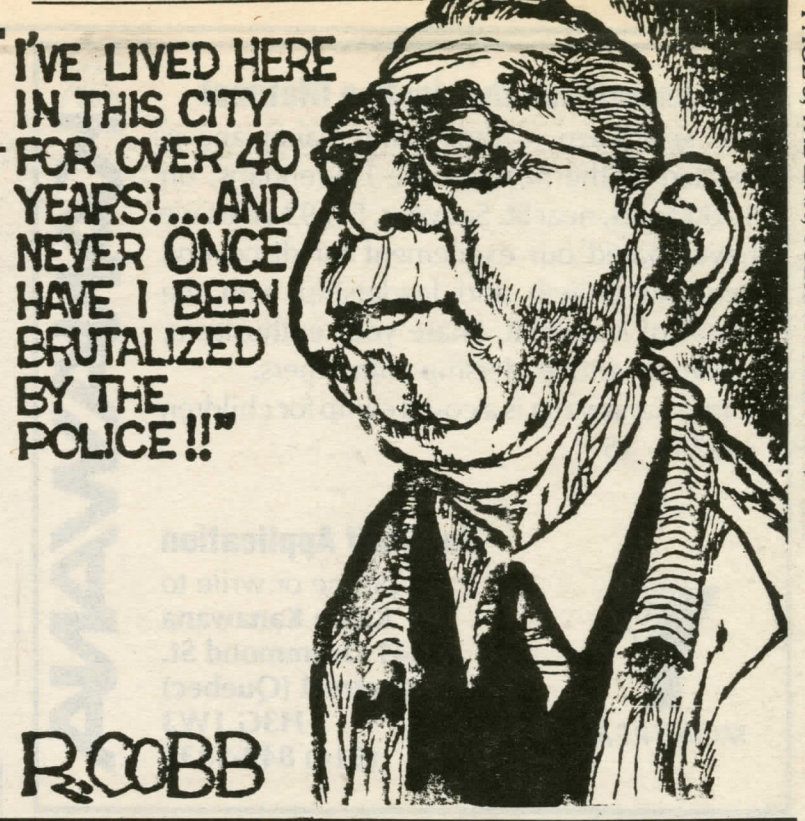
to the Concordi University community

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for your attention during the last few weeks. We believe that during our petition campaign and subsequent referendum there was a productive dialogue going on within the university. You were able to find out how a QPIRG could help you while we got to know you. Regardless of your decision we are happy that we had the opportunityt to talk to each other. As consultation is a basic precept of all PIRG's it was necessary that we hear the things that you have to say. Your comments were interested and our future actions will reflect your concerns.

As you may already know our proposal for an independently funded QPIRG at Concordia was rejected by a narrow margin. We look at this not as a defeat but as an indication that we did not get the message about what QPIRG will be across to you well enough. In the next little while we hope to be able to do an informal survey of your concerns so that in the campaign next year we will have concrete proposals of what we want to accomplish. QPIRG will stay active over the summer and we will be thinking about what we have learned this spring and making plans for next fall.

Some good news is that the QPIRG proposition put to the students at McGill was accepted overwhelmingly and the students of that university are now working to establish both their campus chapter and Provincial QPIRG alone. Knowing that historically Concordia students have shown concern about social and community issues we have faith that our next campaign will be sucessful.

Ken Huck, Kelly McDowell, Robert Sensenstein, Sheila Smail, and Peter Yachnin for the QPIRG Organizing Committee



Comment

Incinerators hamper recycling

The Link feature on recycling (March 15) was informative, but unfortunately, there was no mention of the growing North American trend towards municipal waste incineration. As is the case here in Montreal, plans are being developed to build more incinerators. Paper, which is an essential element of any successful recycling programs, is in direct competition as fuel for garbage incinerators.

The City of Montreal burns 90% of its municipal waste at the Des Carrieres incinerator,located in densely populated Rosemont. One thousand tons of unsorted plastic, newspaper, batteries, aerosol cans, bottles (etc.) go up in smoke daily. This burning amalgation combines together to create a variety of toxic gases.

Dioxin is the most toxic chemical known and is fatal in the tiniest of amounts (1/200th of a drop). It has a tendency to store in human fatty tissue. Enviroment Canada released a report, in 1984, pinpointing municipal waste incinerators as the major source of dioxin in the Canadian enviroment. Sweden placed a moratorium on waste incinerators after discovering alarming quantities' of dioxin in Swedish mothers milk.

Remarkably, Micheal Fainstadt, chairman of the MCM executive and also of the MUC enviroment committee, claimed on the CBC news last fall that Des Carrieres incinerator "does not pollute". He based this assumption on a single dioxin study conducted in 1983, that had actually admitted to have had 'inconclusive result'. The study had been developed by DOW Chemical, manufacturers of Agent Orange, a dioxin based defolient.

Montreal's incinerator's pollution control device captures only large fly ash particles, the toxic gas and finer particles escape toally unabated.

Similar incinerators to Montreal's have been proven to be releasing literally tons of lead, cadmium and sulphur dioxide daily. This past year both Dr. Paul Connett and Ralph Nader have spoken at Concordia about these dangerous emissions. There have been no publicized tests for heavy metal or acid gas emissions from Des Carrieres stacks.

Cities in Japan and Europe, concerned about pollution, are already recycling up to 85% of their waste. These communities have proven that recycling is the least expensive method of dealing with garbage. A well organised total recycling program can actually make a profit and create 6 times more jobs than dumping or burning. Recycling does not pollute and could save natural resources.

The pilot projects proposed by the MUC are just drops in the buckets compared to the total amount of Montreal's waste budget. If the MUC wanted to recycle 75% of the islands garbage then 75% of the waste budget would have to be allocated towards recycling. Announcements of plans to build new incinerators, to accomodate the municipalities who use the Miron Quarry, are forthcoming.

Fainstadt and the MUC intend to run the City of Montreal's incinerator at least until the year 2009. Owing to the fact that paper is needed to fuel the incinerator, serious recycling won't arrive to Montreal for quite some time.

Peter Monet
Total recycling Committee

Staff meeting—Wednesday, 2 pm

Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec

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the Link

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Attacking the poor: Pierre's Parody of welfare reform

by Karen Takacs

Beverly is a third-year Applied Social Sciences student at Concordia. She is a single mother supporting two young children. Her only source of income is a monthly welfare cheque of $720. Under a new system of welfare reform proposed by the Quebec government, she will receive only $687. Last night, however, when Beverly opened her mail, she found a notice informing her that her welfare will be cut off next month. She doesn't know why.

Just before Christmas, Quebec Manpower Minister Pierre Paradis unveiled his postion paper on welfare reform. Public hearings began in mid-February and will end this week, but many groups claim they are a sham. The 'public' hearings are inaccessible—in particular, to those directly affected by the reforms. The government refused to provide funds for the poorer groups to travel to Quebec for the hearings or to have any hearings held in Montreal.

The hearings themselves are pointless: some of the reforms outlined in the paper have already been implemented and it is well known that Bourassa intends to push the reform through in the first weeks of April regardless of what takes place in the hearings. In fact, most groups have claimed that the so-called reform is no reform at all, but an attempt to dismantle the entire welfare system.

KNOCK, KNOCK

Paradis began to set the stage for this type of reform as far back as March 1986. 150 newly hired welfare police—the Bou-Bou Macoutes— went on "surprise visits", knocking on the doors of welfare recipients and threatening to cut off their welfare payments unless they were allowed to carry out detailed room-by-room inspections in search for "evidence of lavish spending". The government spent nine million dollars on the hiring of this special force, claiming they would uncover $68 million in welfare fraud. At the time critics were quick to point out that at the most this amounted to no more than 3% of all money spent on welfare—and that the real problem was not welfare cheating, but serious unemployment.

Despite the criticisms, Bourassa kept up the harassment of welfare recipients and thereby reinforced built-in prejudices—like 'all welfare recipients are cheats'. This hostile climate heated up this summer, during the postal strike, when the government announced they would cut off payments to over 6,500 claimants who didn't pick up their July cheques, claiming they obviously didn't need the money. Critics noted the percentage of cheques left unclaimed was very small and certainly no larger than usual for the month of July—moving month.

It became obvious that this was a carefully orchestrated public attack on welfare recipients designed to create a climate that would be favorable to an overhaul, if not outright attack, on the welfare system.

According to the actual policy paper, the objectives of the reform are quite noble: parity for welfare recipients under 30 (they live on $184 a month under the current system); improving the status and living conditions of persons with severe disabilities; the creation of incentive programs for those who are considered 'employable'; and the introduction of subsidies for low-wage families.

While on the surface it would appear the government has achieved these objectives, a closer examination reveals that the policy will further impoverish, discriminate against and stigmatise welfare recipients.

BUREAUCRATIC NIGHTMARE

The paper outlines three different programs: the Financial Support program, the Employment Incentive program, and the Parental Wage Assistance program, each with their own categories and criteria creating a total of 60 different payment scales. Many of the categories are vague and even arbitrary, but the difference between the benefit levels are great. This increased bureaucracy and ambiguity grants the welfare agents—the people who are responsible for determining which category you fit into—overwhelming discretionary authority and coercive power.

The Financial Support program is designed for those recipients who are deemed 'unemployable' by their 'socio-economic agent' due to long-term mental or physical health problems. Although the definitions of the categories of 'employable' and 'unemployable' are not quite clear, the difference is crucial. If you are labelled 'unemployable' you will receive $585 a month, as a single person, compared to $405 a month for those who are 'employable'.

To be deemed 'unemployable', welfare recipients must get a medical certificate from a physician or psychiatrist. But doctors may be reluctant to grant them such certificates. In fact, it would be in the doctors' best interest to suggest their disabilities were curable. This would mean that they would be considered 'employable' but temporarily 'unavailable for work, would grant them $100 less a month, and lock them into a treatment plan with their doctors.

Being labelled 'unemployable' is not much better. The label effectively allows the government to wash their hands of the problems that these people face. There is no effort made to improve environmental conditions to allow them a chance to work. In the long run, it may be less expensive for the government to increase their benefits than to provide them with adequate services and equal opportunities for training.

As well, the arbitrariness of the categories may leave the door wide open to discrimination against particular segments of the population. A doctor's definition of mental health and 'employability' may vary according to the patient's background, ethnicity or sex.

As it is, there are more women under psychiatric care and treatment than men. According to Martha Lopez, a Côte des Neiges community organiser, this program encourages triple stigmatisation: as women, as psychiatric patients and as 'unemployable' for the rest of their lives.

The Employment Incentive program is equally coercive, confusing and discriminatory. It shifts the burden of responsibility for employment from the state to the individual. Any welfare recipient who is single and deemed employable is expected to undergo an intensive job search period for the first nine months, during which time "problems representing impediments to entry into the job market would be detected."

Project Genesis, a Côte des Neiges community organization, pointed out in their brief at the hearings that "normally one would think that these problems might be related to work experience, skills and academic preparedness. However the government anticipates that the chief immpediments are alcoholism, drug addiction, chronic indebtedness and criminality. These statements are clearly discriminatory, inflammatory and reflect an acute contempt for and denigration of the character of welfare recipients."

Perhaps this is why the program only makes its work and training programs available after the first nine months.

While beneficiaries are on their intensive job hunt they will receive $405 a month. They currently receive $487 a month. The cruel irony is that the new scale does not recognise such long-term needs as transportation for those who are on the intensive job search program.

It also ignores the fact that refugees do not receive a work permit right away. Lopez called this one of the "legal contradictions of the system: refugees will be expected to look for a job for the first nine months but won't get a work permit for five or seven months."

This system is highly punitive, ignores the real needs of individuals and lays the blame for the poor employment situation on the individuals—while at no point addressing either job creation or tax reform.

WELFARE WORKFARE

Its coercive measures become evident when looking at the benefit scales for work and training programs. After the first nine months, recipients receive $520 a month if they participate in a work or training program, $460 a month if they are 'unavailable', $420 if they would like to participate but program space is unavailable, and $405 if they refuse to participate.

Critics have also complained that many of the training programs are traditional or even obsolete and that many of the jobs are dead end jobs, requiring little skill.

In the brief the government notes that subsidies will be focused on such jobs as seasonal, temporary work as planters in forestry, pickers in agriculture and sanitary workers. Welfare recipients are being forced, out of necessity, to work at jobs that would otherwise command reasonable salaries so that they may earn less than subsistence wages.

Under the program currently in place, single persons would be receiving $503 a month by 1990 with no work requirement. Those who participate in the training or work program, however, receive $520 under the new system—only $17 more per month. But this doesn't even cover the cost of a bus pass.

On top of this the employers—those who benefit most from the programs—are not required to provide permanent jobs to the participants. This will then effect all low-income people. There is no incentive to pay people even at minimum wage, if businesses can hire people to do slave labour for only $100 dollars a month.

There should be no shortage of applicants to fill these jobs. According to a recently leaked internal report, the government plans to set a ceiling of 63,000 placements. This means that there will be space available for less than 15% of 'employable' welfare recipients, and the rest will be penalized, forced to get by on only $420 a month while they wait. The difference is crucial for single mothers who will only receive the same amount earned by a single 'unemployable' individual.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST

The Quebec government's paternalistic plans to encourage women to have more children—as demonstrated by the Liberal Party's heated debate last month over whether women in Quebec should have 1.8 or 2.2 children—seem to apply only to upper class women. In fact, mothers, and single mothers in particular, are penalised throughout the reform:

- The costs of child care are only given to single mothers who are eligible for the parental wage assistance program (those who are already working.) They are not included for a married couple which implies that the women will be expected to stay home to look after the kids, nor are they included for single mothers or married mothers who will have to "fall back on informal networks," according to Maximillian Polak, MNA for Ste Anne and Liberal member of the Social Affairs Commission.
- Women who stay home with their children after the children are two years of age do not receive the full benefits of 'employable' persons. This suggests that the government does not recognise their work or responsibliites at home as real work. The paradox is that they are penalised for not working outside the home yet do not receive child care expenses.
- Any two persons living together for a year will be deemed a couple and any benefits will be based on their combined resources. This will make all female recipients economically dependent on the men they live with, whether they themselves choose to be or not. We can only suspect that the state will continue to play the role of the absent husband/father and cut off payments to women the minute they suspect a man is hanging around, then ask questions later.
- Benefits of $100 plus child-care expenses for single mothers in back-to-school programs available under the current program will be effectively cut.

continued on page 8

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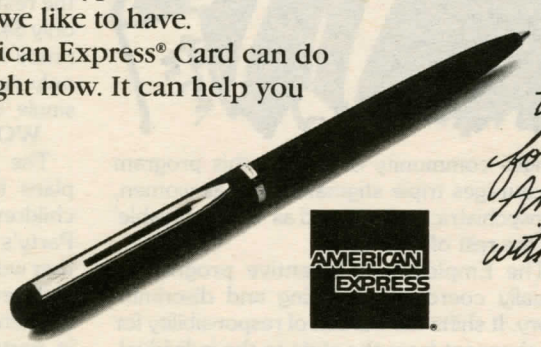

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continued from page 7

Youth are also targeted under the new program. Although parity for welfare recipients under 30 is introduced in the reform, it will only come into effect in 1990 and will only apply to a select few—others simply won't get any benefits at all. In fact, Paradis has stated that he hopes to eliminate 17,000 youth from the welfare rolls by applying the same discriminatory criteria that are used for loans and bursaries: you must be 18 years of age or over; have not lived in the family home for two years for reasons besides studies; have been in regular employment for two years; are or have been married; have one dependent child or more; or have a bachelor's degree.

Sandra Capponi, a member of the Coalition for the Rights of Welfare Recipients, noted,"Now, you'll have to have a degree to get on welfare in Quebec." These criteria effectively force young adults to be economically dependent on their parents. Currently, all welfare recipients under 30 live on a mere $184 a month, suggesting in many cases that family home situations must have been pretty bad.

The Project Genesis brief asks,- "How will these adults ever develop the autonomy which is normal for their age if one of the real problems is the unemployment rate? Has the government simply found a way to give parity to 18-30 year olds without giving them anything at all?"

Meanwhile the harassment continues. At the beginning of this month hundreds of welfare recipients in Verdun, Cote des Neiges and N.D.G. received notices in the mail—instead of their monthly welfare cheques—to meet with their 'socio-economic' agents at a predetermined time, up to two weeks later. When community organisers callled on behalf of some recipients who had absolutely no money to buy food, let alone pay their rent, they were told by the agents that 'the landlords will have to wait and the recipients could go to a food bank.' When the recipients finally went in for their appointments they were told that everything appeared to be O.K. and they would get their cheque in the mail. One must wonder whether this is simply a continuation of the harassment tactics or if this is how Paradis plans to prepare his socio-economic agents for their new responsibilities. The attack on the poor continues.

To protest the welfare reforms, write Pierre Paradis, 425 rue St. Amable, Quebec. G1R 4Z1

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Why Women's Week went wrong

Challenging privilege, patriarchy and prejudice

The theme of the International Women's Week activities, organized by Concordia's Congress of Black Women, "Celebrating Women of the African Diaspora." The Congress split away from the International Women's Week organizing committee to organize its own events in an effort to protest the racism exhibited by the International Women's Week oranizers when they were planning the events. Maxine Clark, a member of the Congress of Black Women, speaks out about the problems of racism, and more particularly, the problem of racism within the women's movement.

Maxine: The decision by the Congress to pull out was a decision based on us not being happy with the sort of organizing that was going on and us feeling that there was racism underlying all the decisions that were being made. We felt we didn't want to have anything to do with that. We could do a lot more just organizing among ourselves.

It's advertised as an international event. We think it's one thing to use the name international, but it's another thing to make an effort to be international. We have examples where they have women coming in to talk about being a Muslim woman, for example, when in fact the person who's speaking isn't even a muslim woman.

I think the problem is the fact that the white women in the group come from a position of privilege: To give people money, and to make decisions, and to book rooms, and to do these sort of things. They then capitalize on a lot of those opportunities; rather than doing some networking to find out if other groups that aren't already established want to become involved in the whole process. I think it's a question of them holding on to their privileged positions—using their position to make decisions—instead of concerning themselves about any other groups that would truly represent the international communiy.

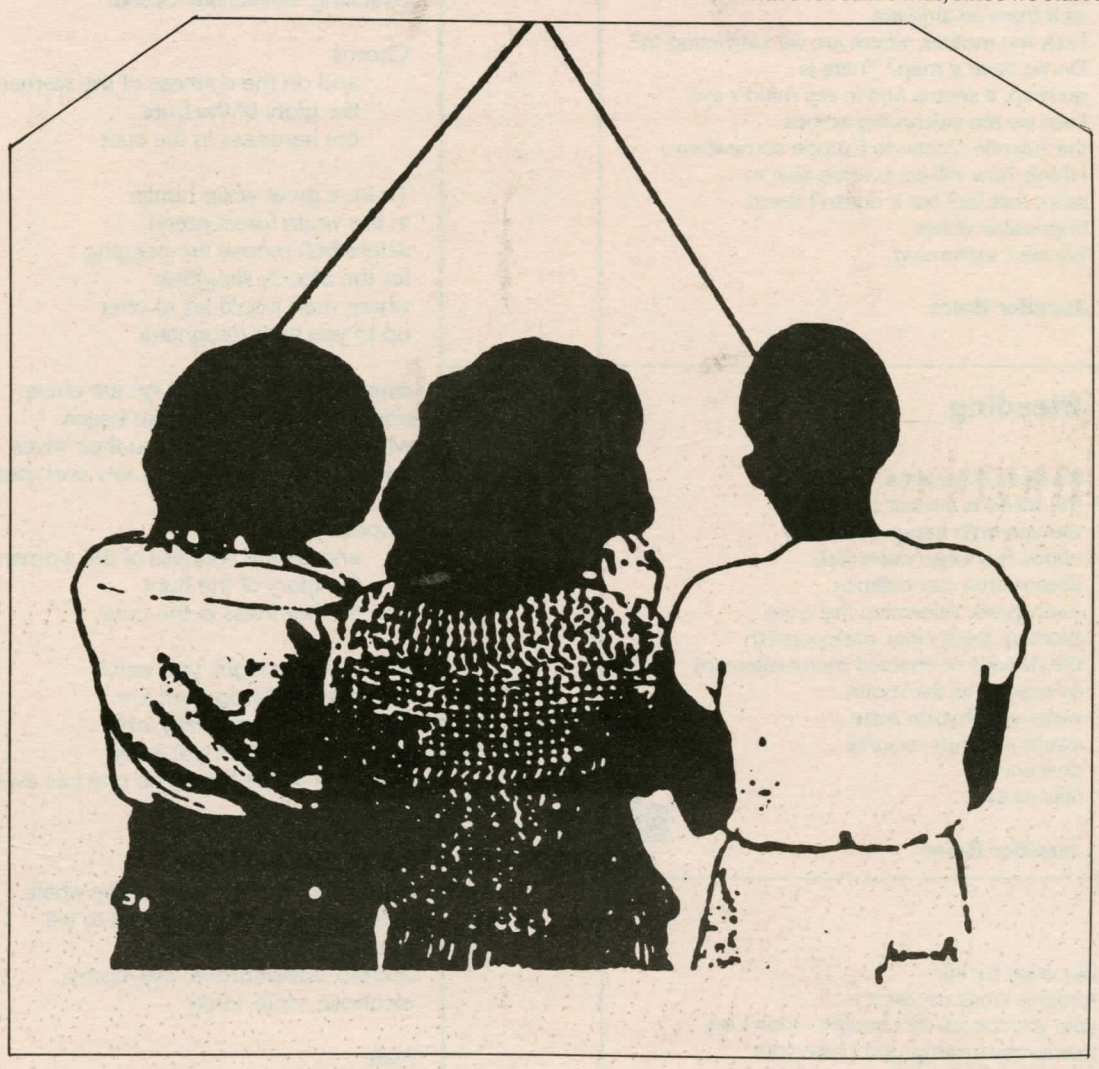
We felt the best thing to do was not to participate in international women's week because it wasn't international. I've found the same thing in my courses. I've taken courses that are called "women of this" and "women of that" but in fact they are talking about white middle class women and, although every now and then you hear something about lesbians in the corner and then you hear something about Chinese women and Black women, that's not the course at all. So I have a lot of problems with these broad names and these broad ambitions when, in fact, no effort is made to meet the aims and the ambitions and the title that is given.

If you're going to work in any movement that is trying to deal with social change, you have to link the issues and you have to really get at the root of everything...especially the issue of how oppressive society is in terms of sexism, homophobia, racism, ageism, they go on and on. But somewhere at the bottom there is something that designs it all. I haven't been able to put my finger on it; whether it is that we live in a patriarchal, hierarchical society that has an economic base catering to the privileged who spread the ideology to back up the economic structure and maintain their privilege... A lot of people I've heard in a lot of my classes especiall y because that's where I have most of my interaction with white feminists, the attitude is 'I feel soooo guilty' and 'What should we do?' It's this sort of defeated, defenseless attitude. I think it's important for women as a whole to realize the structure that they are working within and realize the causes of their own racism and homophobia. These women have to be aware of the system—a core group of white men who are holding the privilege—that continues through advertising, through the books we read, the images we see, the stereotypes they portray. It's threatening for them to see any type of change that would take away their privileged position. It's important for these white women to see this is what they're up against and try not to be so defenseless, realize

I think it's important for them (white feminists) to realize that there are going to be times that they will be extremely blatantly racist, not necessarily calling someone a Paki but they'll say something or make a decision for someone based on their superior position and that is racism also. Instead of being so defenseless, it is important for women to say 'what can I do about this?' They have to realize that, since we start to walk and talk, these things are pushed into our head. Even in our own group, we have to be conscious of things we do to oppress other black women. It's not only white women that are doing it. In our own little realms we always bring in lecturers that speak English. I mean there are 50,000 French-speaking blacks in Canada. We have to make an effort to remember that meetings shouldn't only be in English. We must realize that we have our own biases too. I don't think women should be taking on this defense type of attitude that runs everything and just serves to divide us.

Another example from International Women's Week is some of the women being so adamant and saying that, if we (Black Women's Congress) don't work with them, how are they going to change anything, how are they going to change their attitudes? The sort of idea that 'we need them as much as they need us'. But as far as that goes I think there are stages and there's a time that you have to withdraw and there's a time for separatism as far as I'm concerned and there's a time other people have to internalize their own racism and really do some searching and do some learning before they attempt to involve other people and hurt them in the process and isolate them. I think what it has done is make white women activists aware of their own forms of oppression. Who's to say the same thing won't happen next year, maybe it will but at least more people are aware of what's going on and at least they know we're not going to take that. We can organize ourselves, we don't need them to organize. We're just as bright as they are, we can use the phone and contact people to come in and speak and ask people for money in order to bring them here. We can do it ourselves, it's not as if it's a great privilege to be organizing with them.

(On how the International Women's Week organizing Committee responded to being called racist:) They set up a meeting on the same day that some of us were involved in bringing (Former Jamaican Prime Minister Michael) Manley here; that was the same day as his talk. I think they expected us to show up...They gave us two days notice and we weren't going to come to be blasted by a group of women that are saying 'You're blaming us, how could you make us look bad, we have to put up this united front'. A lot of women are socialized to be peacemakers and to nurture. This whole idea with 'dirty laundry' and the united front: women feel confrontation and conflict is bad and the oppressor is the male, not us. So confrontation becomes a totally negative thing. I think that, in terms of social change, confrontation is just as important as identifying the problem. That's how you grow, like when you're looking at a plant and you water the plant, that's how the plant grows. There is a time for confrontation in order to change.



Accepting alternative sexuality

by Elena Lonero

When I came out to myself and my friends as bisexual, I swore I'd never let anyone dictate whom I loved or slept with. My theory was, and still is, that since I am attracted to members of both sexes, I wouldn't judge whether I wanted to be with a person on the basis of their gender. I tried to judge people solely on more meaningful characteristics like their personality, sense of humour, politics, sensitivity, and attractiveness.

I've always believed that prejudging people because of their colour or sex or religion or age or sexuality is the root of discrimination and inequality in our society. We must judge individuals by fair and equal criteria. We must not hold a group responsible for one person's actions or vice versa.

To put forth this sort of dogma and still generalize and categorize one sex and then eliminate it from a large part of my personal sphere just didn't make sense.

Time went by and I discovered the Toronto lesbian community. Moving around in the straight culture became more and more awkward, if not impossible, as I saw all the blatant heterosexism alienating me from their world. I also discovered that by labelling myself as bisexual when I came out to someone who believed all the sexist and heterosexist myths, I was minimizing my power to change their ideas and, in effect, I was allowing society to continue to promote ignorance.

I was just experimenting, or at worst I was kinky; but, they would reassure themselves, I didn't dress like a man and I had dated guys—I couldn't possibly be a real dyke. So, I started to call myself a lesbian in order to support the lesbian community and to shock ignorant straight people. And, I admit, it was much easier to get by within the lesbian community calling myself gay rather than bi. I no longer had to watch women slide away from me in a bar after they heard the term "bi".

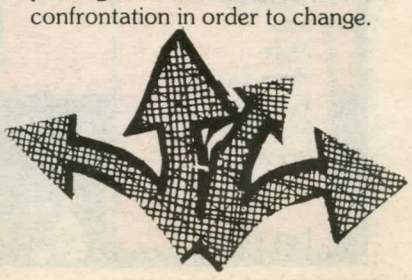
Many of these negative attitudes have roots in very personal and painful experiences that abound in the gay community. Nearly every lesbian I know has been used by a so-called bisexual woman who, after sex or even a relationship, ran back to an acceptable safe lifestyle in a man's arms. These women leave their lovers behind feeling like shit and distrustful of anyone who labels themselves bisexual.

Heterosexism in this society fosters more hostility toward bisexuals among gay people. This need to label and pigeon-hole people in the society adds to the problem.

Bisexual people can, and many do, live freely in the straight world without experiencing the often crushing discrimination gays experience. They can enjoy some of the exhilerating benefits of the gay community while intentionally avoiding the emotional, psychological, and financial price anyone who is openly gay must pay. These people are heterosexually-identified and most likely they do not notice most of the subtle discrimination that homosexually-identified people deal with on a daily basis on the streets, at work, in ads, or in the classroom.

However, this description is a stereotype that is probably the exception rather than the norm. Lesbians, and I include myself, have every right to feel betrayed by the woman who loves women as we do but uses her heterosexual feelings to escape discrimination, and does not protest against the patriarchal heterosexist society for condemning us.

continued on page 13



I am caressing
You with
My pen
You are
Watching
I am
Drawing
You with
My tongue
You are
Moving,
I am
Savouring
You with
My eyes
My wet
Eyes, holding
You in
A drop
Of sweat
A ball
A bubble
Burst me
I'm so
Hungry

Wanting to
Eat the
Music
Humming
Inside
You
Beneath
Me,
Turning me
Inside
You,
Inside
Me
I am
A fresh
Spring
Whirling
In my
Glaze
Kissing
Sunshine
Or moonlight
Or rain
I am
Beating
The drums
Far away
In Mexico

I am rhythmic.
You, my
Soil
I am
Grasping
The earth
With
My toes
I am
Wrapped
Around you
Like vines
Over a
Childhood
Like puddles
In a
Belly-
Button
I am your
Morning
Your night
Your inviting
Cell, shell
Alone with
The fruits
We squeeze
Over our
Faces, our
Necks and
Breasts
You stream
You steam
Like cold
And like
Hot
I am
Always
Wanting
You
More,
More than
Predictability
More than
Secrets
Or faith

Les Tager

Dreaming our Mothers

I am in the ocean with my mother
and one of my sisters
the waves are huge—one splashes
over us, lifts us bobbing up and down
the water is salty and cold
I have a wetsuit, but they don't
The ocean floor is swirling in dark/pale
patterns and shadows, I see them way down
as if from an airplane
I ask my mother, where are we swimming to?
Do we have a map? There is
no map, it seems and in my mind's eye
I see we are swimming across
the Atlantic Ocean to Europe somewhere,
I think, how will we ever be able to
swim that far? but it doesn't seem
impossible either.
We start swimming.

Jennifer Boire

Bleeding

It's been three days, now
the world is almost created
the sun-bulb hangs in the sky
chaos has been controlled
dream time rest balance
earthquake reforming the crust
blood in thick clots, dark purplish
the flood is re-enacted mensuellement
as regular as the moon
water salt rhythm ache
swells rescinds mounts
descends
falls away

Jennifer Boire

Big crazy fucker
running cross my face
take your boots off I bought—don't say
thanks my fucking god I hate your
size 12's.

This isn't a track&field meet here on a
pretty young face so show a little manners
walk
don't
run don't rub my uglyness in my face
saying it doesn't hurt me but you more.
I'm no whore. He told me hello first—
politeness counts in this life too.

You big fucker
making me mad
crazy dreams of hitting back
making your big ugly mug bleed for a change
making you sore inside
making a run for it.

Nancy L.

Correction

In Les Tager's longest poem in the centre spread of last Tuesday's issue, the first line wasn't "My pink gray/Pride Shirt" — It should have read instead "My pink Gay/Pride Shirt."

To all those who got it anyway, hurrah for perception.

The Legend of the Great White Male

It was grand to be a poet
in the god ole days of yore
scaling mountains, sailing seas
Grand! to be a man and free.

Hammering steel rail spikes
roaming the rocky land
playing Cowboys & Indians
rollicking, boisterous Grand!

Chorus:
and oh the softness of the women
the glory of the hunt
the hardness in the cunt

To be a great white hunter
in the virgin forest green
where bull moose are begging
for the bloody slaughter
where men would kill to offer
up to you their daughters

where whisky rum and rye are cheap
and poker players play for keeps
where eskimos tender you their wives
and all you have to eat, is raw seal meat.

Chorus:
and oh the softness of the women
the glory of the hunt
the hardness in the cunt

And late one night, you watch
the whale oil lamp burn low
tell stories in the smelly tent
about the one that got away
the Great White Whale no one has ever seen

Except for you, great poet
alone in your small boat
swallowed into the belly of the whale
then vomited back and lived to tell
the tale, of the great white
(heroic, adventurous, wily, horny,
alcoholic, virile, idiot)

Male.

Jennifer Boire

Christopher Street Liberation Day

the earth is a skin
spread out before the sun
marching footsteps
beat the earthdrum
until the very heavens
resound with our chanting

lifting to the sky
our one voice
reaches all who are silent
our streetsong
shaking the cobwebs
of their minds
the vibrant lilt
rising with the tide
will overcome
the silence

Peter Tyler

by Ron Charles

The woman standing at the wooden folding table in the lobby of the first Congregationalist Church in Washington D.C. collates a handful of handouts and asks me: "What seminar are you looking for, brother."

This was the first time I had ever been called "brother" by another lesbian, gay, or Black person.

"I'm looking for the Rainbow coalition discussion...SSSister," I answered, the uncomfortable words stumbling from my mouth.

The room in which the discussion about the "pink and lavender stripes in the rainbow" was taking place was packed. I found myself for the first time in a room where most of the people were Black *and* gay or lesbian.

In the courtyard outside of the church, in the shadow of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library at the end of a dead-end street, American

par Brigitte Martineau

J'ai créé un homme imaginaire. Je le nomme Jean-Pierre. L'indécision, la colère, les rages et la peur surtout du mépris et du rejet. Il a joui avec des femmes, sans plus. Il a dix-huit ans, vingt peut-être.

Blasé, il s'auto-détruit. Il songe souvent à se tuer. Il cache ses revues pornos "gaies" sous son matelas. A la longue, c'est peu confortable et trop facile à répérer.

Il doit baisser le ton de sa voix, contrôler ses gestes qu'il juge trop féminins; éviter tout vêtement trop voyant, car il ne veut pas que sa famille et ses amis soupçonnent sa vraie nature.

S'ils s'en aperçevaient, ils se moqueraient de lui et le traiteraient de "tapette". Ils le tueraient et ne lui pardonneraient pas cette erreur de parcours.

Jean-Pierre sort dans les bars 'gays', seul, anonyme. Il ne parle de

somebody else's p

Aab moved leisurely in a d
destination being Nowhere in Pa
(you fill in the blank), some cop ey
that could have been interprete
disguised contempt. Hate is a str
cops. He remembered some lines
running in the street / scaring the
more or less, isn't it? Aab could re
could respect a cop. This train
reasonable once you'd experienc
glared back at the cop, no new at
police cruiser in disgust, at the sa
imaginary cop he'd crushed in his
few feet past the cruiser, Aab re
holes; you can't be too careful the
holes; intact—must be my lucky

(Note: This piece was written **befo**
part added afterwards was about

Indian, Hispanic and Asian gay and lesbian groups set up tables with literature and their march banners. Most other forums and discussions held in the days leading up to the march handled issues of concern to visible majority gay and lesbian people.

So when the rally on Nancy and Ron's lawn began, the first person to speak was a Native American talking about what it means to be Native and gay. He told the crowd it is a Native American tradition that when you are on somebody else's land you allow that person to speak first And so he spoke. But he spoke about Native issues, like Leonard Pelletier, or the Hopi people, because these are the issues that concern gay and lesbian Native people.

While being in a city with 500,000 other gays and lesbians—and feeling it—was fun, being able to participate in events and discussions with and about other Black gay and lesbian people was *empowering*.

ces escapades nocturnes à personne. Il tremble, son coeur veut sortir de sa cage thoracique.

Dans le bar, le jeune homme se dirige directement au comptoir où il commande une, deux, trois bières. Il rentre chez lui sans n'avoir pu adresser la parole à quiconque. Ces nuits là, il les passe à rêver aux hommes qui l'ont hypnotisé la veille.

Le même regard, le même trajet. Des lèvres charnues au cou invitant, des hanches fortes aux jambes musclées, colonnes grecques, à la ceinture, jusqu'à la braguette, vers leurs voluptueux phallus sculptés de bronze extirpaient de lui toujours une larme.

Et le même manège solitaire pendant des semaines, des mois? Combien de temps l'abstinence peut-elle durer? Je n'en sais rien, je ne suis pas un homme! Un soir, il ose. Ce n'est ni le coup de foudre, ni la désillusion. Se succèdent un deuxième, un troisième, un quatrième lit....et le voilà!! L'imaginaire....

roblem, and lucky days

owntown direction, his only definite ticular. As Aab approached ---- Avenue ed him from a police cruiser with a look d as undeserved suspicion or badly ng word; Aab hated cops, especially fat of a Clash song: police and thieves / are ation with their / guns and ammunition; spect a good honest thief more than he f thought seemed overtly illogical but d a certain perspective on society. Aab itude to be found here....He passed the e time aware of a bad aftertaste from an teeth and spat out onto the sidewalk. A nembered to check his body for bullet se days. No blood, no bruises, no bullet lay.

Sabaa

re the Anthony Griffin murder; the only he bullet holes.)

Sunglass Attack

You know, I woke up early this morning and
it was a warm, sunny, beautiful day.
So I decided to go for a walk.
The sun was shining brightly, opening my
/eyes,
to see all that I thought was worthwhile—then—
I saw you—but actually didn't.
Why were you wearing sunglasses?
Looking at you made me feel cheated and
/abandoned.
You had beautiful legs and hair—but, you were
/lying to me
each minute.
As you watched me, I really couldn't feel what
/you were thinking.

Sunglasses—a small mask hiding your human-
/ity, placing you outside
of it all.
I—I decided to be honest and stood there,
/letting my eyes show
how I really felt.
And as more people keep stepping out of
/reality and looking,
I feel, perhaps, obligated now to treat you as an
/object.
I only want to see you nude, man and then go
/home.
It is rather cold now, as the sunshine above
/helps my enemy.

Randy Smith

photo by Deborah Vanslet

Lafontaine Park, Montreal, 1988.

by Gilbert Bouchard

We have to stop mourning the loss of the gay, lesbian and bisexual self-identity born in the 60s and 70s and seemingly put to death by the recent health crisis (read AIDS). We have to regroup ourselves and forge a new gay, lesbian and bisexual mythos.

The following is a list of goals for gay and lesbian politics for the 1990s that I heard bounced around at the Lesbian and Gay March on Washington 1987.

1. As lesbians, gays and bisexuals we have to keep in mind the scope of our community—we are not just one sexuality as we are not just one race or nationality.

2. We must give our energies to all issues that affect all gay people. Gays, lesbians and bisexuals out there are poor, unemployed, victims of war, etc. To concentrate only on a sexual or civil rights agenda is to leave out in the political cold many lesbian, gay and bisexual brothers and sisters.

3. The gay and lesbian community must transform itself into a multigenerational community and pass on its teaching to homosexual and straight youth alike—perhaps through a system of role models.

4. We must seek to include all gays, lesbians and bisexual people into our circle, particularly through our language and community activities. We must seek to include heterosexuals into this circle as well, and not segregate ourselves from the larger community.

5. We must turn a forbidden sexuality into a cement of community, and not give up the human right of sexuality because of this current health crisis. Much homophobia is due to sexual frustration and we as a community will always carry the brunt of this oppression as long as there is pain. Therefore it is up to gays, lesbians and bisexuals to take leadership and help unravel a bit of the pain surrounding this sexual confusion.

6. We must stop looking towards the government for protection of our rights, definitions of our being, and the education of our people. We must take power and set the agenda on lesbian, gay and bisexual issues.

7. We have to let society in general know that we cannot be made less than what we are. If our very *nature* offends some people, it has to be known that it is their work to overcome these feelings, not our work.

8. Lesbians, gays and bisexuals have to list what has been lost, calculate what has yet to be discovered, and somehow bring the two together.

9. We must remember that while we are stuck about where we should start, we are not stuck about where we can go. Our movement must be based on social, political, and spiritual *change*.

10. We must fight to affect that kind of change that when future people read about us in the history books, they will have trouble understanding how the injustices we have suffered ever could have happened.

half a million
walk
in step after
step
in anger after
hope
looking
for ancient double
ax
that can split
death
into deliverance into
new
life once more
in mother
within us
all

half a million
walk—on sharp edge
cut
new era from
old
age alone in
darkness
of last days
silent
within us all

Gilbert Bouchard

The tiniest rape
Joke you ever did
See is tacked
Onto a police precinct
Wall

Small tacks, small joke
Small man, small woman
No harm done

Power of innuendo
Spare me your "wit"
In what little blood
I lie, Humour lies too

Little white lie,
Little man's lie,
Watch a child's fib
Grow into murder

Watch a child
Take a penny
For a blow-job

The tiniest rape
Joke you ever did
See is mounted
On St.Catherine

Women
With girl's bodies
Cute pig-tails
Big lollipops
No harm done

Good-humoured boys
Spare me your "fun"
In what big laughs
You get, I get bigger

I won't take life
Too seriously...
If you don't

The angriest
Woman you ever did
See is coming
Up
Behind you

Les Tager

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Women studying women loving women

by Monica McQueen

Many people I'm close to can't figure out why I've abandoned my studies and given up my pursuit of that supposedly magic slip of paper: a degree. In reality I've tapped into a source of ideas, information and energy that will take me—and everyone who has a vision of a more caring world—a far greater distance than any diploma, bachelor or otherwise.

For those of you who've been exploring the Antarctic for the past year, the Lesbian Studies Coalition is a group of academic dykes who've invaded the Simone de Beauvoir Institute and plan to leave very few corners of the university unchanged. We meet weekly to strategize the integration of a lesbian perspective into all aspects of courses in all applicable disciplines and departments.

The requests for help from Women's Studies profs designing course syllabi and reading lists have kept us pretty busy—but by fall we should be reaching places like applied social science, anthropology, exercise science, fine arts....and yes, even psychology, where heterosexism is deeply entrenched.

We won't give up. Ultimately, lesbian studies must become a degree-granting interdisciplinary department in its own right. There is just too much knowledge to be gathered, analyzed and redistributed to let it be scattered throughout the academy.

There are entire cultures, histories, olitics and philosophies associated with lesbian-identified women. We must address the painful issue of lesbian oppression, past and present. We must also uncover the subversive potential of women loving women.

While I was compiling a comprehensive bibliography of the Concordia Libraries' holdings on lesbianism (this and other Lesbian studies documentation are available in the Simone de Beauvoir reading room), I was frustrated by an archaic classification system.

If I had relied on the titles included under "Lesbianism—see also Homosexuality", it would be a very short bibliography. Of course, when you're researching some topics you're bound to make worthwhile discoveries simply by locating the appropriate section of the library and perusing the shelves. I was more disturbed than enlightened.

Not only do many of the books about lesbians treat us as sick or sinful, but the Library of Congress classification system seems to think we belong just past pornography, incest and sexual perversion but before prostitution. Strange. The lesbianism I know has more to do with feminism, revolution, the Goddess....

If the Library of Congress was the only obstacle I wouldn't be so enraged. All of society considers us sexual monsters and, therefore, perfectly valid targets of attack.

Even progressive organizations, supposedly seeking social justice, have no qualms about offending us with language that fuels the daily physical violence against lesbians—violence ranging from shock treatment in psychiatric wards (yes, this still happens in Canada) to street harassment.

Questions like "Would you be afraid, sick or squeamish to discover your sister was a lesbian?" or "Would you allow a lesbian to teach your children?", which have appeared in recent psychology surveys, would cause outrage if the reference was to members of racial, religious or ethnic groups.

Why don't lesbians deserve even the minimum of human dignity? What is it about a woman's choice of primary relationship that makes her so dangerous?

Racism, sexism and homophobia are qualitatively and quantitatively different. But all are rampant in our society.

A white student in my feminist ethics class asked, "Isn't it a Black woman's responsibility to confront white women when, out of ignorance, they are guilty of racism?" A Black woman in the class emphasized the enormous physical and economic risks if the person she had to confront were an employer, medical professional, teacher or welfare worker.

As a lesbian, I too have felt extremely threatened by and unable to respond to some heterosexist attacks. The danger lies in the fact that both lesbians and women of color often find themselves at the disadvantaged end of a massive power imbalance.

We will also both benefit from the destruction of the hierarchical system which concentrates power among those who identify with white, heterosexist privilege. Meanwhile, those who have the power to make a difference have the responsibility to stop being ignorant, racist and homophobic.

I was deeply moved reading an article by a Jewish woman. I identified closely with her personal struggle. Should I try to "pass"—pass as WASP or pass as straight—to achieve goals which might otherwise be unattainable?

Unlike Black women, we both have that choice. I am deeply offended, however, as I'm sure my Jewish sisters are, when it is suggested that if we really want our equality we should abandon our "deviant" choices. Heterosexuals and Christians have made a choice as well, by default if not consciously.

Black women, Jewish women and lesbians all experience stereotyping in the mainstream media which marginalizes them by placing them outside the feminine ideal.

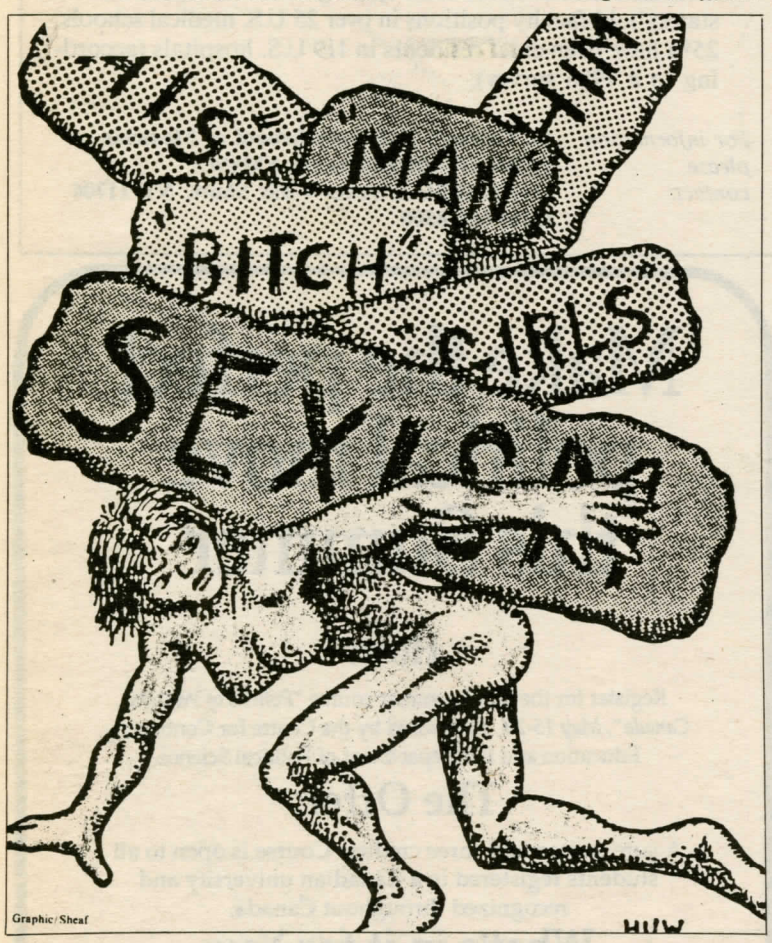
Black women are alternately portrayed as insatiable sexual objects available to men or as asexual, hard-working and devoted "mammies". Jewish women are censured for being spoiled and pushy brats or loud and domineering mothers. Lesbians either have their sexuality ignored or are considered tough, male-identified, but man-hating bitches.

What we are only beginning to realize is that these negative stereotypes serve to restrict the range of behaviour open to *all* women, regardless of their race, religion or sexual orientation. These restrictions keep us from full emancipation in our interpersonal relationships, in the work place, in the political arena and on the streets. Worst of all, they keep us divided from each other.

In order for all of these issues to be given adequate analysis and air time we need a recognized and well-funded Lesbian Studies program. We also need programs in Black Women's Studies, Jewish Women's Studies, Immigrant Women's Studies, Differently-Abled Women's Studies....

We need a full analysis of heterosexism, sexism, racism, and class integrated into courses in every department. Finally, we need to continue the exchange between women in various groups who have chosen to organize around specific issues.

The amount of feminist activity at Concordia makes it the ideal forum for this exchange.



No, we're not all nymphos ...

continued from page 9

On the other hand, lesbians do not have the right, upon discovering that a woman is bisexual, to assume that she does not support their community and assimilates herself into an elitist patriarchal society. If they do, they are creating more of the alienation that they have struggled to eliminate.

I have watched a friend of mine, an ardent feminist and one of the strongest, most secure people I know, break down and cry because she felt frustrated, ostracised and guilty because of her bisexuality.

It is the guilt that gets to me the most. I understand the struggle lesbians face and I want to support the community in every way I can. By calling myself bisexual, even by recognizing my attraction to men, I have often felt that I am abandoning my people and their community.

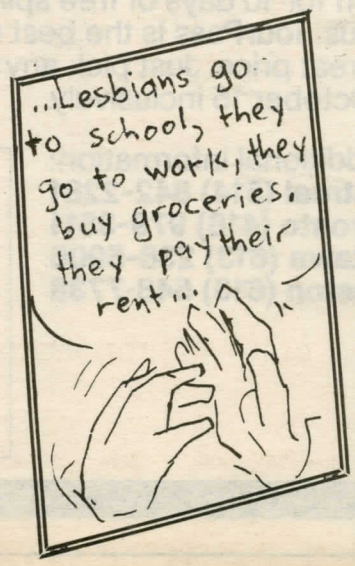
I vividly remember attending a lesbian event after having spent the night with a man and, for the first time in my life, feeling out of place. I hated the feeling and I prepared myself to never even look at a man again.

We have to smash the stereotype of the fickle, untrustworthy and conforming bisexual while creating a visible community that is linked with the existing gay communities. We should be working together to eliminate patriarchy and heterosexism and to integrate alternative sexualities into the society.

When I first moved to Montréal, I immediately came out to everyone I met as a lesbian. This is second nature to me now. Yet, for the first time in my life I began to feel uncomfortable with what others would think of my sexuality. Before writing this I felt a short but unmistakable rush of panic at the thought of "coming out" all over again to the lesbian community here as bisexual.

Many bisexuals feel isolated from others like them, as do many homosexuals before they discover the gay community. Generally, bisexual people have no community of there own and, if they are open about their bisexuality, they are often excluded from both the straight and gay cultures.

A single benefit of labels, despite the limits they impose, is that they define an identifiable group whose members can turn to each other for support. As of yet, bisexuals are not a legitimate minority in our society.



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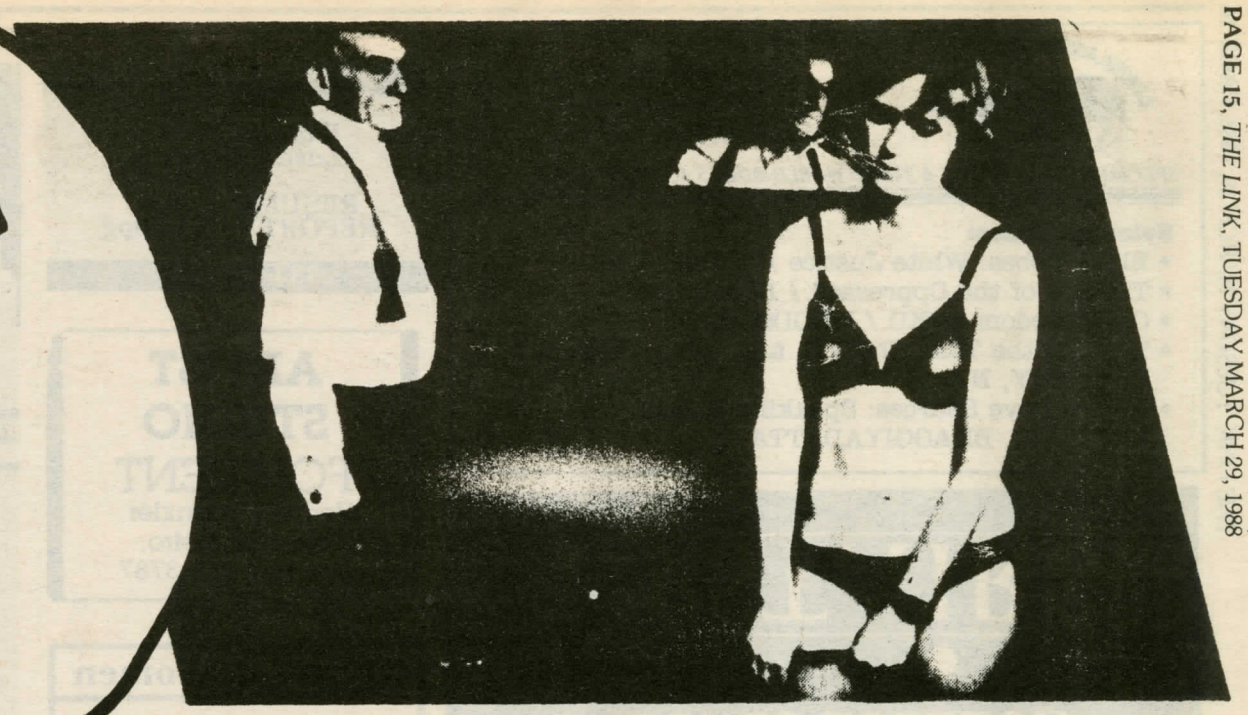

by Thia Fuller
and Christy Schram

"Exactly like those blow-up plastic dolls that's the image most feminists seem to have of women like us. It's as if our whole lives are fetishised and what is really offensive about that is that that's precisely how men see us....we aren't merely pornographic images-we're here; as much part of this shitty culture as any group of women, and we've as much to say about it."

-Nicki, stripper and member of the English Collective of Prostitutes

WHORE SEX. This is the core of feminists' pity, fear and contempt for women in the sex industry. Because women are afraid of sex, because feminists are trying to escape the classic objectification of women as "holes", they are turning their backs on "the bad girls".

Prostitution is ghettoized, marginalized and illicit because whores are threatening. A whore is a woman who knows how to give a good blow job; a whore is a woman who knows what a good blow job is worth. She makes money off of what women are supposed to give away for "free"—for marriage, for God, for the State.

When women like Andrea Dworkin say that under the patriarchy, all sex for women is a form of prostitution, they want women to stop fucking. Prostitutes put it another way: all forms of buying and selling are forms of prostitution.

What they're doing is no different from what other women are doing—selling labour for wages. What they want is what any other union wants: job security, safety standards, and freedom from harassment and abuse.

Feminists all over the world claim to be fighting for women's rights. The question is, which women's rights?

In 1983, feminists staged a sit-in in Soho, London's red light district. The English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP) called it a confrontation between "good girls" and "bad girls".

The Black prostitutes declared, "In Soho the majority of women out on the streets are Black. In proposing to 'reclaim Soho for women', the fact is that white women who can afford not to work as prostitutes on the streets are proposing to 'reclaim' the streets from Black women who have no alternative."

When feminists help organize neighbourhood "clean-ups" and attacks on prostitution, they are threatening the women in the industry. Stringent solicitation laws make prostitutes more dependent on pimps, tricks and the good will of neighbourhood cops.

These feminists are colluding with the same forces that oppress all of us. Until recently, they have been preaching about prostitution without recognizing prostitutes' own organizations and demands.

Why? Because the only thing that separates "us" from the whores is our sexual illiteracy—cloaked as respectability. By presenting the whore solely as "victim", feminists become the patronizing saviours/ Madonnas and eliminate a whole range of scary questions about women's sexuality.

As "good girls", we know sex *is* dangerous. It leads to rape, unwanted pregnancy and bad reputations. But the whore knows everything the "good girl" doesn't. WHORE SEX—equals promiscuity, equals forbidden knowledge, equals power.

For those on the street, "Respectability" means a low-paying, low-status, shit job with sexual harassment and abuse from customers and employers. Feminists want whores to stop being whores without offering these women any alternatives. At the same time, they are denying prostitutes the right to make their own choices about their bodies and their lives.

Women's sexual power is as frightening to women as it is to men. That's why we have all helped put prostitutes on the outside, where they can't use it. And that has to stop.

"Women everywhere demand the right to go anywhere, at anytime, for pleasure or work, in safety and without fear or threat of violence or arrest. When prostitute women are not safe, no woman is safe. The streets are ours."

-Women Against Rape (WAR), Britain.

Books to read up on—if you're interested: **Sex Work**; **Pleasure and Danger** *(edited by Carol S. Vance)*; **Caught Looking: Feminism, Pornography and Censorship**; **Good Girls, Bad Girls**

And when did you first notice this desire to earn a living by walking the streets and accosting passersby?

The World According to Prickett, or Feminine Mystique, Ravaged

Miss Prickett sits.
alone, Piously
(keeping careful notes on the cadence of her
/breasts)
Reflecting.

No blacks or
Other forms of Non-Conforming
individuals
Are allowed, on her domain.

Sexual abberations
(shudder)
Perish the thought.
(oh those homosexshuls!)

THEY MAKE HER SO VERY ANGRY.

Listen to me
her up-right (up-tight)
morals complain.
Constantly.

'Tis I who is right, she (they?) proclaim.
The rest of you are merely disagreeing for the
/purpose of being wrong.

Laid back
She assumes the Missionary
position
For her tenth lover.

Promiscuous?
"Not me," she claims,
"It's done in the name of love,"
Sh wisely adds.

Prudently (prudishly?)
Miss Prickett swallows.
Slowly. Sensuously.
A pill.
Warding off such indelicacies
she feels she musn't succumb to.

Miss Prickett thrusts
her breasts—forward, upward
Pertly.
For there is nothing wrong
with being Woman, you know.

Watch that cleavage
heave.
Beaded with sweat.
Virgin-like.

Miss Prickett, you understand,
is not a tease. (oh no)
She is really just...
Feminine.
And possesses Virtues
every Good-Girl should have.

jacqueline dubé

Stripped Strip Montreal
gentrified, purified
barely buy a safe walking by
Days of our lives—shit rose and left
Condoms got hard-ons
and hopped uptown

But this lover's back licking cracks
Crack, smack an ass
some bitchy bite just hard
enough to cum by
What not really into hurt boy?

Grease my palm with satisfied
dollars hardearned
Grease your palm with me
wet with dollars hardearned
Up and down sliding
I won't stop until your fantasy
says so

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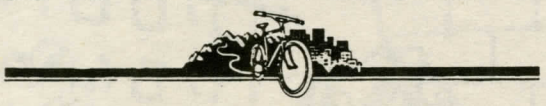

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the obscenity page

Just a Little Rant

by Christy Schr ım

"Who are all t ıe women who don't come gently ınd don't want to; don't know yet what they like but intend to find out; are the lovers of butch or femme women; who like fucking with men; practice consensual s/m; feel more like faggots than dykes; love dildoes, penetration, costumes; like to sweat, talk dirty, see expressions of need sweep across their lovers' faces; are confused and need to experiment with their own tentative ideas of passion; think gay male sex is hot; are into power? Are we creating a political movement that we can no longer belong to if we don't feel our desires fit into a model of proper feminist sex?"

— Amber Hollibaugh "What We're Rollin' Around in Bed With."

Latin Foreskins

How can I describe that Latin foreskin hanging down between your legs?

Moist with its many personalities and smells,

Hot and spicy odors of love and passion, changing with the hours of the day,

Pulling the skin back after a bath, after dancing and drinking, after sleeping ad making love,

Giving different pleasures to my nose,

Watching the skin glide and glisten, as the dick it covers glows into the night,

The smell of a Latin foreskin,

The fish of life, seafood to my mind,

Giving me pleasure everyday.

Yeh!

Randy Smith

In Defence of Cunts

by Fish Fuller

Imagine this: something moving under a sheet in the dark. Oohing and aahing. What could it be? The average person might say it's a couple sleeping together. S/he wouldn't voice it aloud, but what s/he is really imagining is a man and a woman having intercourse—or more precisely, *he*'s fucking *her* in the cunt. And *he*'s on top.

The movements in the dark are a "tasteful" euphemism that covers up that standard image—the status quo. We don't have to talk about it because we *know* what's going on. Most of society has a vested interest in keeping it that way.

Obscene language—"tasteless" words like cunt, fuck, suck, tit, clit, pussy, whack off, jerk off—offend because they are hard, powerful sounds that smell and feel like sex: the real thing, not the standardized, impersonalized image.

In the mouths of sexual outlaws—aggressive cunts, colored cunts, cunt-licking cunts and fairies with balls—it's language that threatens to lift the bedsheets off our idea of "proper sex" and reveal the queers, the dykes, the bitches, the whores.

Concepts of what is "obscene" and what is acceptable come from the same racist, sexist, classist and heterosexist power structure that imposes control on the rest of our lives.

"Cunnilingus" is an OK word because it's authorized by the medical/legal establishment—sterilized, deodorized, standardized. But "cunt-licking"—now that's a term that comes from a direct experience.

Obscene language comes *up* from the streets, *up* from our bedrooms/ kitchens/ parks/ balconies—not *down* from a medical text.

Gays and lesbians know how ideas of "obscenity" and "tastelessness" are used against us, denying us our sexuality and identity. Our very existence is obscene in the eyes of the general populace—how tasteless of us to mention it in public.

When we take our obscenity out into the streets and claim it for our own, when we refuse euphemisms that hide sexual rules, roles and regulations, we shake the foundations of the sexual status quo. But will we stick by it?

The fear and disgust of "obscenity" are deeply embedded in our culture. In search of "taste", of "respectability" in the eyes of the world, the people who were out in the street yesterday are now the ones who are calling names.

In my own experience, it's scary how much the lesbian and feminist communities exercise censorship and control of other women, labelling "deviants" and "obscenity" within their own ranks.

On Our Backs, North America's best-selling lesbian magazine, is banned from many women's bookstores, including the Toronto Women's bookstore. Why? Because it is pornography: they consider its stories and images degrading to "women". What women? What about all the women who put it together—and buy it?

At the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival this summer, the sign that s/m women had posted to point the way to their camp was repeatedly torn down by other lesbians. It seems the very word "s/m" is too obscene for lesbians to bear.

Blatant and subtle forms of censorship are as rampant in the lesbian community as they are in the "straight" world.

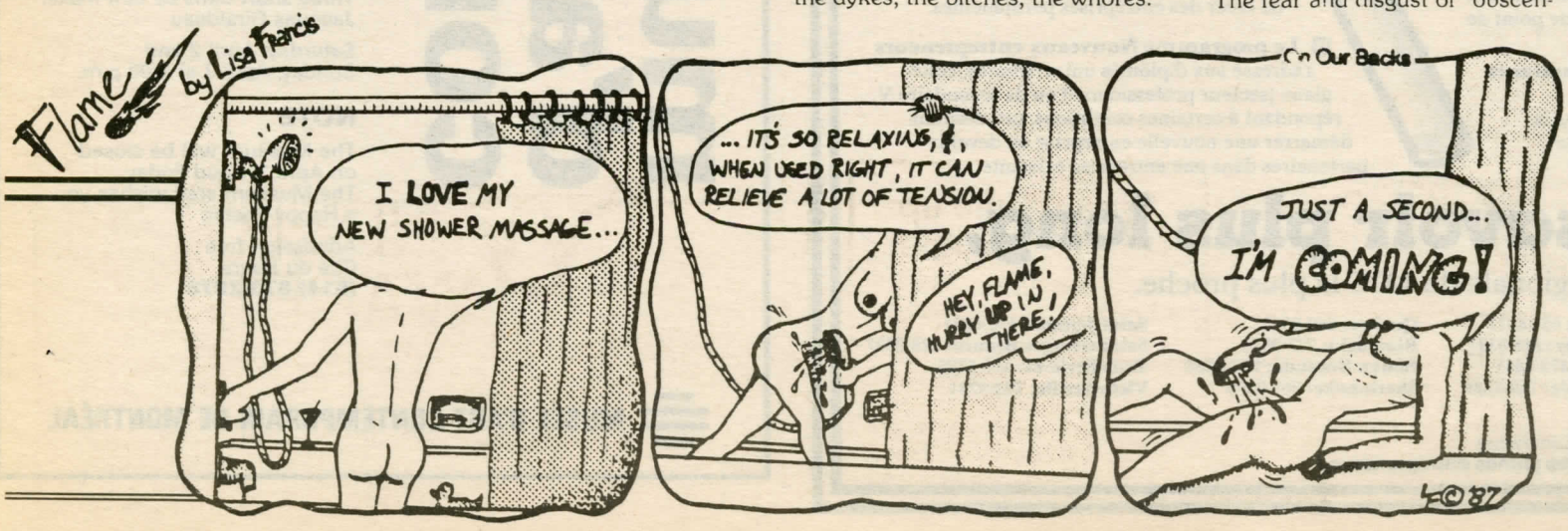
Spiritual, caring, gentle, relational sex is OK; anonymous sex, hard sex, or penetration with more than one finger is not OK. And people who play butch/femme roles, use sex toys, sell sex for money or practice consensual s/m are traitors to the feminist cause.

Of course they are traitors: they are lifting the bedsheets on lesbian sexuality and yelling out what they find underneath. They are calling sex by its names, using the words that allow us to explore how sex smells, feels and tastes.

The reason they're so hated is because they're mouthing obscenities—just when we thought we were getting respectable.

we've been wonderin for awhile where all the pro-sex cunts have gone?
like they've been pushed underground by the anti-pornograpers and the politically correct.
homosexual monogamy wants to be as respectable and sexless as the heterosexual couple.
we're fallin back into the bullshit—good girls don't and bad girls do.
our politics are crowding our sexualities out
political lesbianism or feminist lesbian?— i went to the women's collective at concordia last year an a group of feminists told me that the difference between lesbians and gay women/dykes was lesbians are caring, political, conscious women and gay women and dykes just went to bars and fucked each other.
—i stopped attending the meetings. feminism and lesbianism are not synonomous creatures
strait women don't know how sweet a wet pussy tastes.
it's not only strait men who wonder what lesbians do in bed...
on the way to the bar with my chick last nite a dyke in a car leaned out and shouted "hey——I just left an I'm movin homeward are you goin in?"
so we did the lesbian gossip thing and what did this dyke who owns a byke say but: "politically correct lesbians are boring fucks."
the three of us stood on the street yellin "yeah—boring fucks!"
we obviously agreed that good hard sex was hard to find.
we wouldn't be feminists at the expense of our sex
if you can't find the goddess fucking with a dildo—maybe you should improve your technique.
in the bar thrusting our hips in "a patriarchical way" to annie lennox's viciously funny "i need a man" we checked out the clientele.
all the trendidykes had gone to fagbop at la boom an we were left with the crunchy granolas.
the d.j. charlie was pissed off cause lesbians only dance to a certain kind of song—in a certain kind of way.
so charlie can't play what she likes to play
and the fucking bar serves coors anyway.
talkin to her and what did she remark—just that lesbians refuse to talk
—about what?
—about sex.
an she blushed when she told us she was lookin for sex toys
—you know those veggies and candles and dildoes every resourceful homemaker has.
we have a dildo that looks like a prick cept she's hollow and plastic an her name's henrietta.
the better we got to know her the more we forgave her for bein made like a man cause we know she's got the soul of a woman.
just wait til *we* take over the sex factories.

but women like andrea dworkin and sheila jefferies who tell us masturbation is preperation for oppression—an want to dry out our cunts so's we can think strait——
are like the father, son and holy asshole who've been burnin our tits, sewin our slits and tyin our tubes just so we can think strait.
the best thing about being a lesbian is the taste, feel, slime of a cunt—her cunt contractions around my tight fist....
fuck the sexologist, theorists and propagandists—
instead we should talk to each other about what turns us on an what makes us cum...
til we overcum the patriarchs an those who fuck us over
cause everybody knows wild wet women
DON'T GET THE BLUES.
we all know men can be jerks.
all of us gag on the taste of oppression
the pain of being 'other' hurts less every time i bury my face between some lover's thighs.
racism, sexism, homophobia and classism pervade all our lives—


Flame by Lisa Francis
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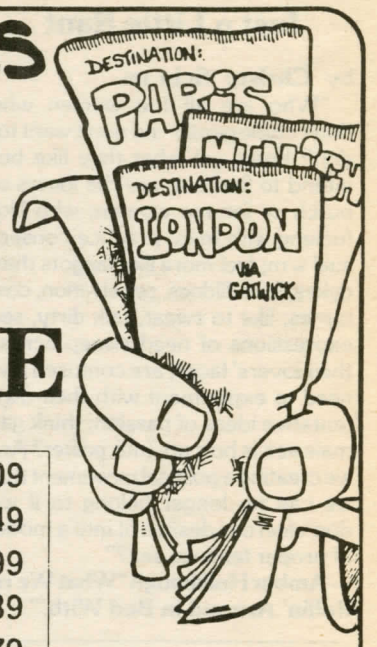

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Elections

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Lesbian and Gay Friends of Concordia provides information and support for many people in Concordia.

Dances • Marches • Videos

Avoid These
- fucking without a condom
- sucking the head of the penis (pre-cum)
- swallowing urine/scat
- rimming
- Sharing unwashed sex toys
- fisting without latex gloves (anal or vaginal)

Be Cautious
- fucking with a condom
- "french kissing"
- "watersports"/scat external

Enjoy!
- toe and tummy sucking
- mutual masturbation
- hugging, massage
- mouth-on-mouth kissing
- body-to- body rubbing
- licking the shaft of the penis

EXHIBITIONS

■ **Ewen, Gagnon, Gaucher, Hurtubise, Mc Ewen: À propos d'une peinture des années soixante**
Exhibition organized by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal from its permanent collection
Jusqu'au 22 mai

■ **Miquel Barceló Peintures récentes**
A selection of works executed between 1985 and 1987 by this Spanish artist
Until May 22

■ **Ken Lum Recent Works**
Works created by this Canadian artist especially for the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal
Until May 22

VIDEO

■ **Tribute to Robert Filliou**
Presentation of the video "Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts Part II" in tribute to artist Robert Filliou
Until May 8

SPECIAL EVENT

■ **The Sixties in Quebec**
Three short films by film-maker Jacques Giraldeau
Saturday, April 2 and Sunday, April 3 at 2:00 p.m.

NOTE
The Museum will be closed on April 1, Good Friday.
The Museum staff wishes you a Happy Easter.

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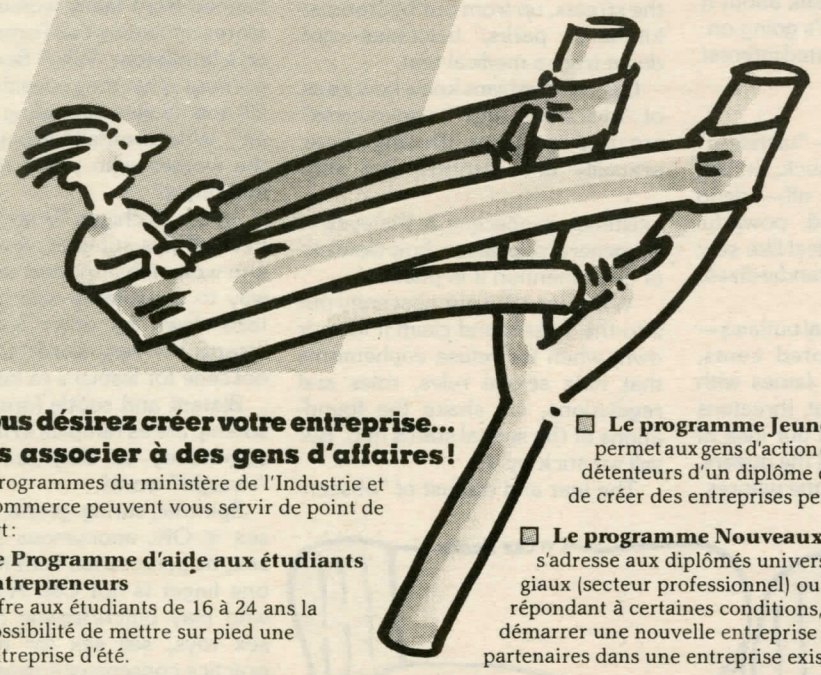

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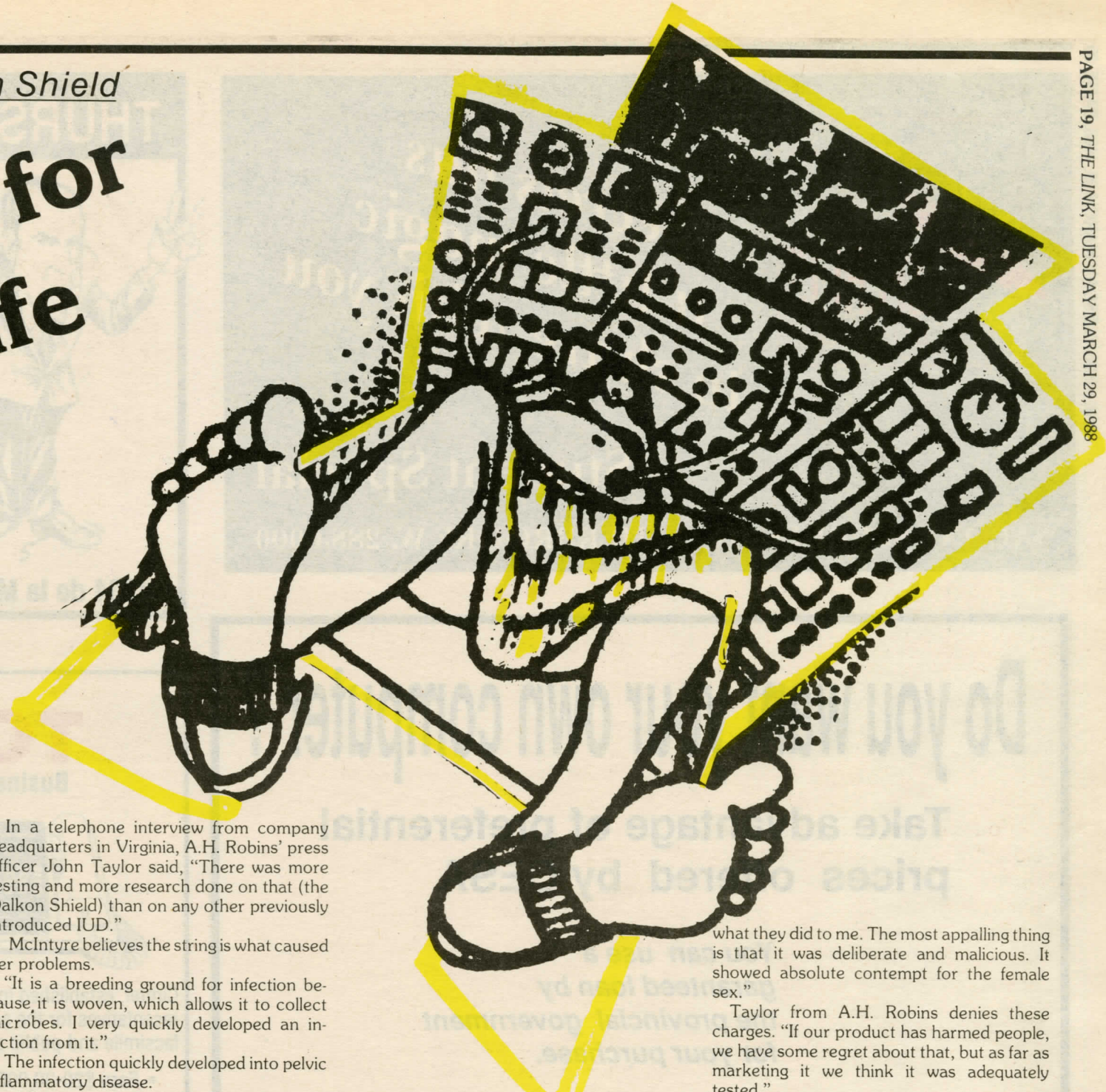
Gouvernement du Québec
Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce
Direction de la promotion des jeunes entrepreneurs

Women and the Dalkon Shield

A nickel for your life



by Heidi Modro

A month after her second child was born, Concordia history student Christine McIntyre paid a visit to her gynecologist. It was the beginning of a seven-year nightmare

"I feel they owe me seven years of my life. Between the age of 18-25, it was a struggle to be alive. I spent two weeks of every month in bed in horrible pain. I want them to pay."

McIntyre, now 32, is one of 110,000 Canadian women who had the Dalkon Shield contraceptive device implanted during the 1970s. She suffered permanent damage to her system as a result.

Like 4,000 other Canadian women, McIntyre is still waiting to see if she will be compensated for the damage the device has caused.

She had the Dalkon Shield implanted on the advice of her physician who assured her it was the best and safest IUD on the market.

"I trusted him. I was eighteen years old. I trusted in doctors in those days," she says, seated in the den of her east-end apartment.

The shield has since been linked to pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancies, spontaneous abortions and infertility. The statistics are staggering. In the U.S alone 36 deaths have been linked to the device. Worldwide there have been 20,000 reported cases of sterility, at least 11,000 fetal deaths, hundreds of children born handicapped, deformed and brain-damaged—all the result of a device which its manufacturers marketed "as the safest, superior, modern IUD".

In 1971, A.H.Robins of Richmond Virginia, the makers of Chapstick, Sergeant's flea collars, and Robitussin cough syrup, introduced a new intrauterine contraceptive device they called the Dalkon Shield.

It was a tiny,crab-like device with a string that was planted at the walls of a woman's uterus. It cost 25 cents to manufacture and at the time U.S federal law did not require approval of the device by the Food and Drug Administration. Nor did Canadian laws, which also permitted easy distribution of the device in this country.

Women had only the claims of A.H. Robins to rely on, based on statistics which would later be exposed as completely false. One of the more spectacular of these claims, for example, was a remarkably low 0.5 per cent pregnancy rate. In fact, the failure rate was closer to 5 per cent.

Robins also claims to have done extensive testing of their product before marketing it and many doctors believed its false insistence that the shield was harmless to human fetuses.

Roswitha Brandau, a member of Dalkon Shield Action Canada, a support group for women who have suffered from the effects of the Dalkon Shield said, "How could they have done proper testing when so many casualties came from the shield? If they had done tests they would have known there were a lot of problems with it."

A recently published book on the Dalkon Shield, *At any Cost*, reveals that the company knew almost from the beginning that the shield's string was faulty as it acted as a wick for bacteria to enter the woman's uterus. A quality control supervisor spotted the flaw right in the factory and suggested a modification that would have cost an extra five cents. He was fired.

In a telephone interview from company headquarters in Virginia, A.H. Robins' press officer John Taylor said, "There was more testing and more research done on that (the Dalkon Shield) than on any other previously introduced IUD."

McIntyre believes the string is what caused her problems.

"It is a breeding ground for infection because it is woven, which allows it to collect microbes. I very quickly developed an infection from it."

The infection quickly developed into pelvic inflammatory disease.

"One afternoon," McIntyre recalls, "I began hemorrhaging. Because of my two children I had to wait in bed until my husband came home. When he arrived I was in extreme pain."

She was quickly rushed to the hospital, where tests revealed that she had ruptured a cyst and very nearly died. Yet the doctors still did not link her medical problems with the shield and kept it in for another four months.

For the next five years, she was in and out of the hospital regularly.

"It felt as if my insides had been ripped out. Doctors began thinking that my problems were psychosomatic since there was no visible cause for them," she says.

Eventually, her marriage broke down. She suffered an emotional breakdown.
stress of recurring infections and was prescribed valiums to calm herself down.

At her insistence, a gynecologist eventually performed a hysterectomy.

Mcintyre grits her teeth in anger as she looks back at the experience. "I can't believe how the medical profession treated me. First, they put in the IUD which wasn't proven safe. Then when I had problems with it, they didn't take it out. And when I nearly died hemorrhaging, they still left it in for another four months...and then for years kept me on all kinds of anti-biotics.
On top of it all, they started thinking that my problem was only emotional and gave me valiums. They didn't realize that my emotional state was caused by my physical problems."

The insertion of foreign objects as birth control dates back at least 2000 years. Until the early 60's North American doctors refused to use them because they often caused infections, peritonitis and death. Up until 25 years ago, the use of IUDs was considered a form of malpractise and warnings against their use were given to students in medical schools.

With the growth of the population control movement, attention was focussed on the IUD. According to Doctor Robert Mendelsohn in his 1979 book, *Male Practice*, "The IUD was attractive because it could be inserted into poor, uneducated women who were not strongly motivated to stop having kids. Once it was inserted, the family planners no longer had to worry about whether the women would take the trouble to use a diaphragm or remember to take the pill."

The devices hit the market in 1962 after the Population Council held an international conference to promote the IUD. At this conference Dr. Robert Willson of the University of Michigan School of Medicine issued a statement which would prove to be prophetic.

"If we look at this from an overall, long-range view—these are things I've never said out loud before and I don't know how it's going to sound—perhaps the individual patient is expendable in the general scheme of things, particularly if the infection she acquires is sterilizing but not lethal."

Mendelsohn notes that the "expendables" referred to by Willson were the poverty-stricken, uneducated racial minorities in the United States and women in Africa, Asia and the underdeveloped countries. Inevitably, however, the discriminatory distinction was blurred and North American women of all races became the guinea pigs on whom IUDs were tested.

McIntyre knows what it's like to feel expendable. She always suspected the Shield was the cause of her problems though she could never get any of the doctors to confirm it until a few years ago when a journalist friend told her about the IUD's reputation.

"Suddenly everything fell into place. All my suspicions were confirmed. It felt better to know I wasn't alone and there was something I could finally do about it."

She was put in contact with a lawyer and decided to sue A.H. Robins.

"I'm not suing solely for the sake of money. I'm suing for the principle behind it. I resent what they did to me. The most appalling thing is that it was deliberate and malicious. It showed absolute contempt for the female sex."

Taylor from A.H. Robins denies these charges. "If our product has harmed people, we have some regret about that, but as far as marketing it we think it was adequately tested."

McIntyre's legal battle got a considerable boost last December after the Virginia courts ordered A.H. Robins to pay $2.6 billion into a fund reserved for victims of the shield. But, although her suit was filed four years ago, she has yet to see any forthcoming compensation.

Montreal lawyer Jean-Pierre Menard, who represents about 100 Quebec women who are suing A.H. Robins, says, "It will probably take a very long time before women will see any money. Now, the courts must evaluate the amount of damages in relation to the gravity of each case."

He estimates that fifty per cent of the claimants will receive some form of compensation.

"The largest sums will go to those women who suffered an ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous abortion, a hysterectomy or serious pelvic infections."

To be eligible for any form of compensation, each woman will have to prove that she wore the Dalkon Shield, that there were damages and that the damages were caused by the shield.

Menard said such proof is difficult to obtain since "Many doctors no longer have the medical records. It is required by law that medical records only be kept for five years."

Successful claims must also survive the questionable legal tactics of A.H. Robins, which *Toronto Globe and Mail* columnist Michele Landsberg described in a February, 1988 column.

"In lawsuit after lawsuit, Robins was guilty of lying, coverup, stonewalling, destruction of evidence and harassment of plaintiffs," she wrote.

McIntyre is skeptical about her chances, noting she now has as much faith in the justice system as she does in the medical system.

"I doubt I'll ever see any money," she says with a resigned shrug. "The big companies have all the resources, the lawyers and the money to find the loopholes. But I'm not giving up."

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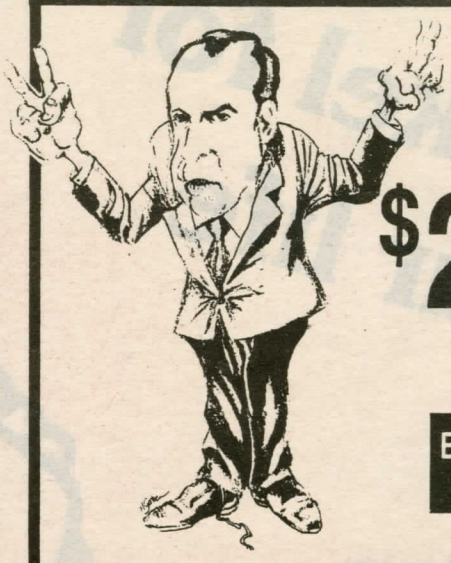

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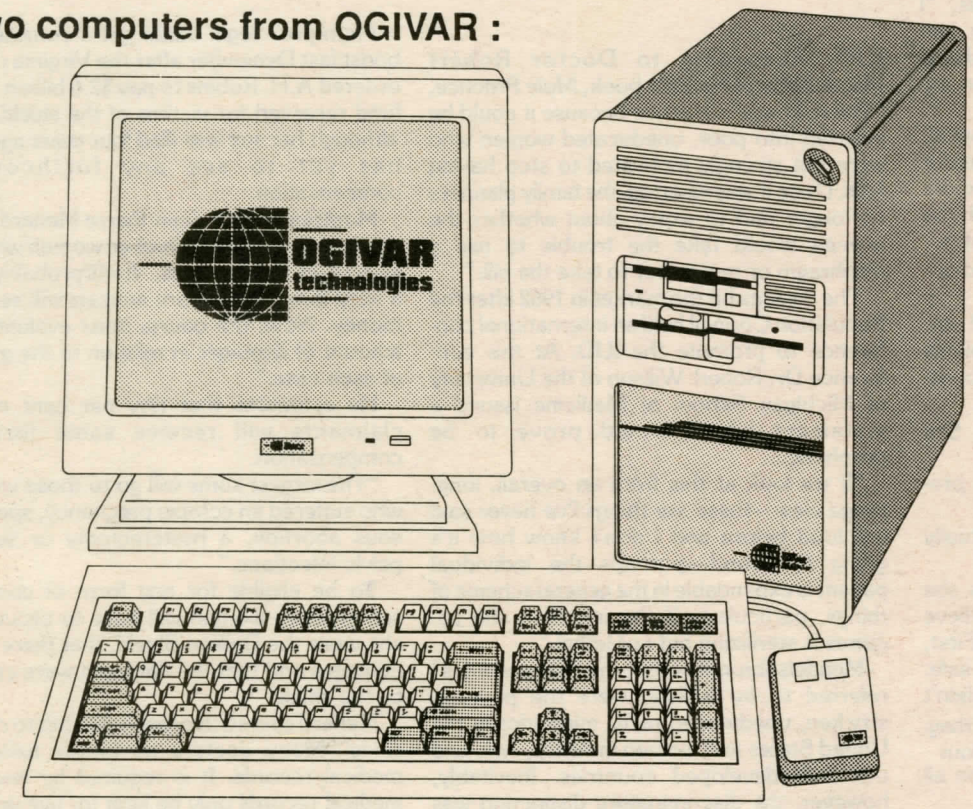

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